



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

March 30, 2007

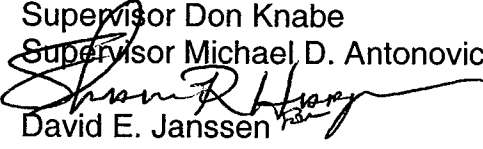
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To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
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Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
From: 
David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

AB 335 (De Leon), as introduced on February 13, 2007, would allow victims of domestic violence requesting CalWORKs Homeless Assistance to provide a sworn statement in lieu of third-party documentation to verify that homelessness is directly related to domestic violence.

The CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Program helps families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness by providing funds for temporary shelter, first and last month's rent and/or a security deposit to secure permanent housing. Assistance is limited to once in a lifetime unless strict criteria are met. One of these exceptions is when homelessness is a direct result of domestic violence. Currently, CalWORKs families are required to provide written third-party verification that an eviction or homelessness resulted from a financial hardship or circumstances beyond their control, including homelessness as a result of domestic violence by a spouse, partner, or roommate. AB 335 would amend existing law to allow victims of domestic violence seeking CalWORKs homeless assistance to self-verify domestic violence via a sworn statement.

According to the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), many times families who are homeless due to domestic violence are forced to flee from their homes without clothing and/or important documents. AB 335 will expedite the delivery of CalWORKs

Homeless Assistance to help families who are victims of domestic violence remain safe and stabilize their lives.

DPSS recommends that the County support AB 335, and we concur. Consistent with existing Board policy to support proposals that increase services and benefits for CalWORKs homeless families and provide services to domestic violence victims and their children, **our Sacramento advocates will support AB 335.**

AB 335 is sponsored by the Western Center on Law and Poverty and is supported by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the Child Care Law Center, the Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organization, and the County Welfare Directors Association. There is no registered opposition on file.

The bill passed the Assembly Human Service Committee on March 27, 2007, by a vote of 7 to 0, and now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 942 (Migden) as introduced on February 23, 2007, would establish a rebuttable presumption of employer discrimination if an employee, disabled by an employment related injury or illness, is not reinstated to his or her regular position within one day of release by the treating physician. Further, it would be a misdemeanor for the employer to refuse to reinstate the employee within the one day period.

CAO Risk Management indicates that under current law, it is unlawful for an employer to discharge, threaten to discharge or discriminate against any employee who has filed or intends to file a workers' compensation claim. Currently, there is no presumption of discrimination for inaction by the employer. While the presumption of discrimination is rebuttable, the additional requirement upon the County as an employer to defend itself against such a presumption would increase costs significantly.

Failure to reinstate the recovered employee to his or her pre-injury job with full salary and full benefits would be subject to a fine of \$100 per day plus salary and benefits. In addition, the employee's workers' compensation benefit would increase by 50 percent. The employer would be able to obtain the opinion of an alternate evaluator and would be exempt from the reinstatement requirement prospectively if the evaluation concluded that the employee would not be able to fulfill all of the requirements of the job without risking further illness or injury. In order to qualify for the exemption, the employer would be required to reinstate the employee to full salary and benefits during the evaluation period.

Consistent with County policy to oppose legislation that expands existing or creates new presumptions related to injuries, illnesses, diseases or physical conditions that can be claimed as job related for workers' compensation or service-connected disability retirement workers' compensation, **our Sacramento advocates will oppose SB 942.**

This measure is scheduled to be heard before the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee on April 11, 2007.

STATUS OF COUNTY-INTEREST LEGISLATION

County Advocacy Bills

County-supported AB 119 (Price), which would require the State to pay for expenses incurred after January 1, 2007, for elections proclaimed by the Governor to fill a vacancy in the office of State Senator or member of the Assembly, or to fill a vacancy in the office of the United States Senate or Representative in Congress, passed the Assembly Committee on Elections and Redistricting by a vote of 7 to 0 on March 27, 2007, and now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

County-supported if amended SB 156 (Simitian), which would enact the California Reading, Literacy Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2008, and place it on the 2008 statewide primary ballot to authorize the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$4.0 billion for library construction and renovation was heard in the Senate Education Committee on March 28, 2007, and placed on the Committee's Suspense file. Among those testifying in support were representatives from the California Library Association, California Special Districts Association, California Parent Teacher Association and the Los Angeles County Librarian.

County-sponsored AB 223 (Runner), which would allow those serving in the military, who are called to active duty in the United States on short notice, to be able to cast an absentee/provisional/or faxed ballot allowing those voters to be part of the official canvass, passed the Assembly Elections and Redistricting Committee on March 27, 2007 by a vote of 7 to 0. The bill was amended to delete unnecessary language and now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

We will continue to keep you advised.

DEJ:GK
MAL:EW:acn

c: All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist
Local 660
Coalition of County Unions
California Contract Cities Association
Independent Cities Association
League of California Cities
City Managers Associations
Buddy Program Participants